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TAGS: PREL PINS PGOV PHUM TU IZ ADANA

SUBJECT: SOUTHEAST TURKEY PRESS SUMMARY,
JUNE 04, 2003

¶11. This is the Southeastern Turkey press summary for June 04, 2003. Please note that Turkish press reports often contain errors or exaggerations; AmConsulate Adana does not vouch for the accuracy of the reports summarized here.

POLITICAL, SECURITY, HUMAN RIGHTS

¶12. Radikal/Evrensel: Elbeyli Sub-governorate in Kilis organized a conference on May 30 so as to turn public opinion against "Armenians' Fictitious Claim of Genocide." It was mandated all public employees in town attend the conference. Assistant Associate Prof. Dr. Mehmet Kabacik from Kilis' Educational Faculty was the speaker of the conference. Kabacik got furious when Hulya Akpinar, a member of Teachers' Union Executive Board, asked Kabacik if Turkey had an integrated policy in the event the Armenians managed to make their case accepted because of the strong Armenian lobby in the United States and Europe. Kabacik asked the teacher who she was, with what title, and on whose behalf she dared to ask such a question. Kabacik's reaction disturbed the audiences. In order not to prolong the argument with Kabacik, Akpinar left the conference room with her five colleagues and returned later. Acting Elbeyli Sub-governor Ramazan Yildirim prepared a report expressing that the six teachers provoked the conference. The court accused Akpinar of "making statements and behaving in a manner that would cause indignation in public." The judge decided on releasing Akpinar on bail of approximately one thousand USD. The rest of the teachers were released on the condition of reporting to the court when needed. Because Akpinar could not locate an official to deposit the bail, she remained under detention the previous day. After depositing the bail last evening, Akpinar was let free.

¶13. Milliyet: According to a piece of news wired on the internet by "Kerkuk-Kurdistan," the Kurdish Institute in Istanbul, KII, claimed Kurdish and Kurdish culture was under pressure in Turkey. The KII and the Kurdish Cultural Foundation in Sweden, KCFIS, asked for financial support from the Swedish Consul in Istanbul for printing one hundred thousand books in Kurdish and distributing them in Eastern and Southeastern Turkey for free. It is claimed that the Swedish government has appropriated approximately 377 thousand USD for publishing 20 books in Kurdish and distributing them until the end of 2004.

¶14. Cumhuriyet: A union is being established in Sirnak for the first time after the lifting of the State of Emergency from the Southeast. The groups affiliated to KESK (Public Employees' Unions' Confederation) applied to the governor's office for opening their branches. The State of Emergency, declared in the region in 1987, thwarted opening union branches and prohibited many activities. It is going to be hard for the unions to find public employees who would qualify to become members to their unions because the employees generally serve in Sirnak for a period of two years.

¶15. Bolge/Turkiye: Three people kidnapped Nusret Gulec, director of Is-Bank in Pozanti, Adana, and held her for ransom. A person coming to the bank yesterday morning asked the bank director to ride with him on the pretext of visiting a client. As the director got into the car two other fellows got into the car, too. When Gulec realized that he was being kidnapped, he struggled with the

drivers and the fellows in the car. The car ran into a bus cruising on E-5 highway. Gulec and the kidnappers were wounded in the accident. The police arrested the kidnappers.

HOLTZ